

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1602

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO JCS WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 7899

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO FOR AMBASSADOR DEAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PINT, PE

SUBJECT: CAEM ORIENTATION TOUR

1. ON AUGUST 31 GENERAL CHAVEZ, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRO DE ALTOS ESTUDIOS MILITARES (CAEM) CALLED MAAG CHIEF AND CHARGE TO INFORM THEM THAT "HIGHEST NATIONAL AUTHORITIES" (PRESUMABLY THE PRESIDENT AND THE GOVERNING JUNTA, PERHAPS WITH CONCURRENCE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS) HAD DECIDED TO CANCEL A SCHEDULED TRIP TO THE PRC AND FRANCE FOR HALF OF CAEM CLASS (THE OTHER HALF WAS SCHEDULED TO VISIT THE U.S.) AND INSTEAD REQUEST THAT THE ENTIRE CLASS VISIT THE UNITED STATES. CHAVEZ MAINTAINED THAT THIS REQUEST WAS "A VISIBLE MANIFESTATION OF CHANGING POLITICS" AND A MOVE TO DEMONSTRATE RENEWED PERUVIAN FRIENDSHIP FOR THE U.S. AND THE DESIRE OF 89 STUDENTS/PROFESSORS.

2. THE EMBASSY AND MAAG BELIEVE THAT THE ABOVE DECISION AND REQUEST PROCEED FROM RECENT GOP OLITICAL SHIFT AND REDUCED INFLUENCE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT. CONCOMMITANT WITH THAT SHIFT
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IS A RENEWED REALIZATION OF THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE

PERU/U.S. TIES. GENERAL CHAVEZ HAD EARLIER TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE ARMED FORCES JOINT COMMAND HAD DECIDED TO CANCEL BOTH THE U.S. AND THE PRC/France TOURS DUE TO PERU'S ECONOMIC AUSTERITY PROGRAM AND THE NEGATIVE IMAGE THESE TOURS MIGHT PROJECT. THE DECISION TO REQUEST THAT THE ENTIRE CLASS TRAVEL TO THE U.S. IN SPITE OF AUSTERITY MEASURES REFLECTS A POLITICAL DETERMINATION THAT THE CAEM RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. IS OF OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE.

3. IF THIS MOVE IS PART OF A FAVORABLE POLITICAL TREND, WHICH WE BELIEVE IT IS, WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE IT. IT RELATES TO BROAD U.S. GOALS IN PERU. THE SOVIET UNION HOPES TO INCREASE ITS POLITICAL INFLUENCE WITHIN THE PERUVIAN MILITARY THROUGH ARMS SALES AND TRAINING PROGRAMS BOTH HERE AND IN THE USSR. THE U.S. SHOULD RETAIN AND SEEK TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH POTENTIAL GOP MILITARY

AND CIVILIAN LEADERS. THE CAEM TOUR OFFERS US A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPOSE POTENTIAL LEADERS TO THE U.S. AND TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM. FOR THIS REASON WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY PLACED THE CAEM TOUR AT THE TOP OF IMET PRIORITIES.

4. WE BELIEVE THE GOP DECISION TO PROCEED WITH THE U.S. VISIT WAS NOT MADE LIGHTLY. A NEGATIVE U.S. RESPONSE COULD COST MORE IN POLITICAL TERMS THAN THE SOMEWHAT INCREASED COST OF AN EXPANDED CAEM TOUR. OUR CHOICE APPEARS TO BE EITHER TO PROGRAM (WITH TOUR MODIFICATIONS) THE ENTIRE GROUP, OR TO CANCEL THE TRIP. GENERAL CHAVEZ TOLD MAAG CHIEF THAT ALL OR NONE WOULD GO, AND SAID THAT IT WOULD CREATE SERIOUS MORALE PROBLEMS TO LEAVE ONE-HALF OF THE CLASS BEHIND.

5. THEREFORE THE EMBASSY AND MAAG STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE USG RESPOND FAVORABLY TO THE GOP REQUEST THAT THE ENTIRE CAEM CLASS VISIT THE U.S. CHMAAG IS SENDING A SEPARATE MESSAGE CONTAINING SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES FOR THE FINANCING, SCHEDULING AND MORE COMPACT ITINERARY OF AN INCREASED CAEM TOUR.

6. THE TOUR IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN SEPTEMBER 24 SO AN EARLY WASHINGTON DECISION IS NECESSARY. SMITH

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